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**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-9, 12, and 13 are canceled. Claims 1-3, 10, and 11 are amended. Accordingly, claims 1-3, 10, and 11 are pending.

Claim 1 recites a check comprising sheet material, means defining at least one pre-printed symbol on the sheet material, and means for storing on the sheet material apriori reference image quality data which is representative of at least one image quality characteristic of the at least one pre-printed symbol on the sheet material to allow a determination to be made about the image quality of the pre-printed symbol on the sheet material based upon the stored apriori reference image quality data.

Applicant would like to point out that Giest et al. ("Giest") relates to a method and system for authenticating personal checks and commercial checks, as well as other personal documents and commercial value documents, wherein the data in these documents is unencrypted but secured through a digital signature. Giest does not disclose any data which is representative of an image quality characteristic of a pre-printed symbol on a check.

None of the prior art including the prior art references of record discloses or suggests a check comprising, inter alia, "means for storing on the sheet material apriori reference image quality data which is representative of at least one image quality characteristic of the at least one pre-printed symbol on the sheet material to allow a determination to be made about the image quality of the pre-printed symbol on the sheet material based upon the stored apriori reference image quality data". Thus, claim 1 patentably defines over the prior art including the prior art references of record, whether taken singularly or in combination, and is therefore allowable.

Claim 2 recites a check comprising sheet material, at least one symbol printed on the sheet material, and means for storing on the sheet material apriori reference image quality data which is representative of at least one image quality characteristic of the symbol printed

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on the sheet material to allow a determination to be made about the image quality of the symbol based upon the stored apriori reference image quality data.

None of the prior art including the prior art references of record discloses or suggests a check comprising sheet material, at least one symbol printed on the sheet material, and means for storing on the sheet material apriori reference image quality data which is representative of at least one image quality characteristic of the symbol printed on the sheet material to allow a determination to be made about the image quality of the symbol based upon the stored apriori reference image quality data. Thus, claim 2 patentably defines over the prior art including the prior art references of record, whether taken singularly or in combination, and is therefore allowable.

Claim 3 recites a method of storing apriori reference image quality data which is representative of at least one image quality characteristic of a symbol pre-printed on the check. The method comprises storing the apriori reference image quality data on the check to allow a determination to be made about the image quality of the symbol based upon the stored apriori reference image quality data.

None of the prior art including the prior art references of record discloses or suggests a method of storing apriori reference image quality data which is representative of at least one image quality characteristic of a symbol pre-printed on the check, wherein the method comprises storing the apriori reference image quality data on the check to allow a determination to be made about the image quality of the symbol based upon the stored apriori reference image quality data. Thus, claim 3 patentably defines over the prior art including the prior art references of record, whether taken singularly or in combination, and is therefore allowable.

Claim 10 recites a method of storing apriori reference image quality data which is representative of at least one image quality characteristic of at least one symbol printed on a check. The method comprises storing the apriori reference image quality data which is representative of the at least one image quality characteristic of the symbol printed on the check to allow a determination to be made about the image quality of the symbol based upon the stored apriori reference image quality data.

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None of the prior art including the prior art references of record discloses or suggests a method of storing apriori reference image quality data which is representative of at least one image quality characteristic of at least one symbol printed on a check, wherein the method comprises storing the apriori reference image quality data which is representative of the at least one image quality characteristic of the symbol printed on the check to allow a determination to be made about the image quality of the symbol based upon the stored apriori reference image quality data. Thus, claim 10 patentably defines over the prior art including the prior art references of record, whether taken singularly or in combination, and is therefore allowable.

Claim 11 recites a method of providing an indication of quality of an image of a financial document other than currency. The method comprises storing on the financial document apriori reference image quality data which is representative of an image quality characteristic of at least one symbol printed on the financial document, receiving image data which is representative of the image of the financial document, retrieving the stored apriori reference image quality data, comparing the retrieved apriori reference image quality data with the image data which is representative of the image of the financial document to determine the image quality of the symbol printed on the financial document, and providing an indication of quality of the image of the financial document based upon the comparison of the apriori reference image quality data with the image data.


None of the prior art including the prior art references of record discloses or suggests a method of providing an indication of quality of an image of a financial document other than currency, wherein the method comprises storing on the financial document apriori reference image quality data which is representative of an image quality characteristic of at least one symbol printed on the financial document, receiving image data which is representative of the image of the financial document, retrieving the stored apriori reference image quality data, comparing the retrieved apriori reference image quality data with the image data which is representative of the image of the financial document to determine the image quality of the symbol printed on the financial document, and providing an indication of quality of the image of the financial document based upon the comparison of the apriori reference image quality

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data with the image data. Thus, claim 11 patentably defines over the prior art including the prior art references of record, whether taken singularly or in combination, and is therefore allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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